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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 000659

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KWBG](#) [IS](#) [SETTLEMENTS](#) [ISRAELI](#) [PALESTINIAN](#) [AFFAIRS](#)

SUBJECT: NOF HASHARON WALKS, TALKS, AND ACTS LIKE A NEW SETTLEMENT, NOT A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD

REF: A. TEL AVIV 06649

1B. TEL AVIV 00511

Classified By: Ambassador Daniel C. Kurtzer for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary. In recent conversations in Washington, PM Advisor Dov Weissglas has asserted that the construction of the new community of Nof HaSharon does not constitute building a new settlement, but instead is construction of a "new neighborhood" of Alfe Menashe, a settlement in the West Bank. Embassy Tel Aviv believes that this analysis does not hold up under scrutiny for the following reasons: Nof HaSharon is too far from the mother settlement; there are two sections of the seamline barrier between the two settlements and no direct road between them; Nof HaSharon will have to rely on an Israeli town within the Green Line for municipal services; and residents of the Israeli town do not want to be connected to the settlement. No natural political, economic, or geographic connection exists between Alfe Menashe and Nof HaSharon. End summary.

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Far From the Mother Settlement  
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12. (C) Nof HaSharon will be located approximately three kilometers from its purported mother settlement of Alfe Menashe. The GOI claims that Nof HaSharon is a "new neighborhood" located within the municipal boundaries of Alfe Menashe; however, the section of the municipal boundary where the new community will be established is disconnected from the municipal boundary surrounding the built-up area around Alfe Menashe.

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Barrier in Between, No Connecting Roads  
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13. (C) Several Palestinian villages, including Habla, Ras Atiya, and Ras al-Tira, are located between Nof HaSharon and Alfe Menashe. In addition, Nof HaSharon is separated from Alfe Menashe by two sections of the 50-meter wide seamline barrier due to the barrier's snake-like pattern in the area. Nof HaSharon residents would have to travel into Green Line Israel along a circuitous 20-25 minute route to reach Alfe Menashe because there is currently no direct road between the settlement and the "new neighborhood." Residents of Nirit showed Embassy economic officers a map given to them by the Alfe Menashe Regional Council that depicted a planned road and new neighborhood connecting the settlement and Nof HaSharon. This road, if constructed, however, would enclose the West Bank Palestinian village of Habla within a seamline barrier enclave.

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Reliance on Israeli Town for Municipal Services  
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14. (C) Based on Nof HaSharon's distance from Alfe Menashe, it would be forced to rely on Nirit, an Israeli town west of the Green Line, for municipal services, roads, and utilities, even though it would be politically connected to Alfe Menashe. Dror Ginatt, the Secretary General of Nirit, explained to econoffs that separate laws would govern the new settlement, making administration difficult.

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Nirit Residents Resisting  
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15. (C) Residents of Nirit strongly object to being connected to this new settlement on the basis that its construction appears to violate Israel's commitments to the U.S. not to build new settlements and to restrict growth to within the built-up areas of existing settlements. According to Peace Now's General Secretary, Yariv Oppenheimer, the mayor of Alfe Menashe told him he did not want Nof HaSharon to be administratively connected to his settlement because providing services and support to this remote community would be cumbersome for Alfe Menashe.

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Comment  
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16. (C) Comment: Nof HaSharon's establishment creates a precedent for accepting building outside of built-up areas of existing settlements, and acknowledges the disconnected municipal boundaries established by settlers to expand settlements. Nof HaSharon's location far away from its mother settlement, its remoteness from that settlement, and its dependence on another community's municipal services suggests that Nof HaSharon is a new settlement, and not a "new neighborhood" of the existing settlement of Alfe Menashe. End comment.

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